

REMARKS

In this response, Applicants have cancelled claims 1-8, 10, 22, and 24 without prejudice. Therefore, all rejections and objections to those claims are rendered moot.

The Examiner rejected independent claim 9 under §103(a) as being obvious over Spartz in view of Marin, and independent claim 21 under §103(a) as being obvious over Spartz in view of Simons. However, the Examiner indicated that dependent claims 11 and 24 contained allowable subject matter. Therefore, Applicants have amended claim 9 to incorporate allowed claims 10-11, and claim 21 to incorporate allowed claims 22 and 24. Independent claims 9 and 21 and each of their remaining dependent claims are now in condition for allowance.

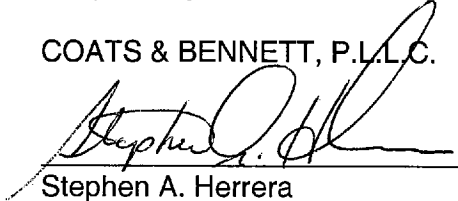
The Examiner also rejected claim 15 under §112 ¶1 alleging that the specification fails to enable claim 15. Applicants disagree. Claim 15, which now depends directly from claim 9, simply defines the communication switches on the hub subrack and on the processing subrack as being, “one of a set of ATM switches, Ethernet switches, or Internet Protocol (IP) switches.” The specification explicitly supports and enables this claim. *E.g., Spec.*, p. 6, ln. 22 – p. 7, ln. 16. Claim 15 simply provides examples of some types of communication switches suitable for use with the claimed invention that function according to claim 9. Armed with the specification and the drawings, anyone skilled in the art would easily be able to understand how the switching fabric would operate regardless of the particular type of switching fabric involved. As such, the specification fully enables the subject matter of claim 15.

Finally, the Examiner rejected claim 16 under §112 ¶2 because phrases within claim 16 lacked antecedent basis. Applicants have amended claim 16 to address these concerns. Additionally, Applicants have made similar amendments to claims 17-18 and 23, and also amended claims 12 and 15 to ensure that the dependencies of these claims comport with the amended independent claims. None of the amendments adds new matter, and all are fully supported by the specification.

In light of the foregoing remarks and amendments, Applicants submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the allowance of all pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

COATS & BENNETT, P.L.L.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen A. Herrera", is written over a horizontal line.

Stephen A. Herrera
Registration No.: 47,642

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P.O. Box 5
Raleigh, NC 27602
Telephone: (919) 854-1844
Facsimile: (919) 854-2084